



*Office of Senator James C. Moylan*

I MINA TRENTAI SINGKO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN | 35TH GUAM LEGISLATURE

February 24, 2020

## **STATEMENT FROM SENATOR JAMES MOYLAN ON THE STATE OF THE ISLAND ADDRESS DELIVERED BY GOVERNOR LOURDES LEON GUERRERO**

The one commendation I would like to express is that the 2020 State of the Island Address was more focused on practical issues, and not largely focused on an assurance of her cabinet appointments. As for the details, I was certainly looking forward to a more comprehensive plan on public safety, and not just on the series of bills that she introduced earlier in the year. While it is easy to say that the administration wants to hire 100 new police officers, our discussions with stakeholders have revealed that there are many administrative policy gaps which need to be addressed. Stakeholders have repeatedly asked my office to address the hiring process and the recruitment phase, as well as retention. As a result, our office worked on a comprehensive plan. We released the plan this morning, and we hope to work with her administration on successful implementation, as it is needed if we are truly going to address our law enforcement shortfalls.

I am concerned about the gross lack of substantial planning for the protection of current economic opportunities, and the development of future ones. The governor stated that she cut taxes for small businesses, but many small entities have shared beliefs contrary to her statement, and further stated that many of them (small business owners) are hurting, even well before the emergence of the Novel Coronavirus. I was hoping that she would announce a reduction in the business privilege taxes (BPT), given the efforts that she touted in her administration's aggressive efforts with both Department of Revenue and Taxation and the Office of the Attorney General, with collecting long awaited taxes. If we are going state that this administration is truly focused on helping small businesses, then let's identify some actions, and not just sounds bytes.

While the Governor spoke of financial stability and environmental stewardship, the details she shared with us seemed to be exploratory at best, and lacking comprehensive and concrete solutions to the real problems our island is facing. For example, she spoke of achieving a fiscal savings, yet failed to mention the growing number of unpaid vendors and lack of supplies at entities like DOE, leaving the situation to continue to fester.

I was hoping that some credit would be provided to the previous administration for some of the accomplishments her administration has realized today, including the genesis of when some of the officers who graduated recently were initially selected.

Finally, I was a bit disappointed that there were no discussions on the conditions of our roads and infrastructure needs. For example, we need more focus and priorities with road repairs and what our schools need. Take Southern High School for example, the

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school needs a workable auditorium. Other schools such as V.S.A. Benavente Middle School need awnings. Let's help them.

While it was nice and cute that the Governor recognized 11 of the 15 Senators, for my three colleagues who were not recognized; Senator Telo Taitague, the Minority Leader, thank you for your relentless fight to seek the building of a new hospital. Senator Louise Muna, thank you for your continued fight to address those seeking medical help, particularly with those inflicted with the dreaded cancer. Finally, to my cousin, Senator Mary Torres, thank you for your continued fight in aiding the disenfranchised. If we are going to claim the desire to collaborate with the legislative branch, then it should be noted that there are 15 representatives elected by voters, and not just 11.

In summary, I look forward to working with the Governor and my fellow colleagues to advance critical initiatives that the people demand.

**END OF STATEMENT**